

פרשת שלח לך / Parashat Shelach Lekha

Shabbat Sivan 18, 5768, June 21, 2008
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Have you ever studied the etymology of Hebrew Names?

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Numbers 13:1-15:41

הפטרה: Joshua 2:1-2:24

הברית: Hebrew 3:7-4:1

החדשה

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In this week's parsha, Parashat Shelach Lekha, Yisrael has arrived to the point that HaShem has planned for them to enter into the Promised Land. Moshe puts together a group of twelve men (leader from each tribe) to go in and spy the land to give a report of the condition of the land, the cities, and who has possession of the land. This leads to the event that is commonly known as "Chet HaMeraglim" (the sin of the spies).

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In the names of the twelve spies (*Bamidbar / Numbers 13:4-16*) we find twelve examples of biblical names that follow the pattern "name son of father" pattern. (Note also that in *Bamidbar / Numbers 1:5-15* there are another twelve names which follow this pattern.) There are various ways we can examine names in the Hebrew bible. For example, names can give us a description of HaShem by describing his character or reflecting his actions. Another way of looking at the text is the use of a name change, like in *Bamidbar / Numbers 13:16* when Moshe changes Hoshea son of Nun to Yehoshua son of Nun; ask yourself the question "what does this name change reflect?" (Note: An interesting study would be one that looks at the names of the Kings of Yehuda (Judah) ie. Yehidyah, Yehoshaphat, Yehoram, Chizkayahu, etc. why where their names changed and what does it reflect?) In Judaism, even the names can give us a clear message but only if the reader knows what to look for; typically the rabbis look at the frequency of G-d's name in the list, its location, how do the names relate to the theme of the text, etc. In order to do this sort of study, one really needs to examine the Tanach in the original Hebrew language in order to get the etymology of the original spellings of the names.

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In this week's parsha I would like to apply the rabbinic technique of examining the list of names of the twelve spies and see what we can learn. First I want to look at the list of tribes and its order and then the names of the Meraglim. In *Bereshit / Genesis*, the tribes originate from the twelve sons of Yaakov (Jacob); listed in birth order, (i) Reuben, (ii) Simeon, (iii) Levi, (iv) Yehuda, (v) Dan, (vi) Naphtali, (vii) Gad, (viii) Asher, (ix) Issachar, (x) Zevulun, (xi) Yoseph, and (xii) Benyamin. Now notice the names of the tribes in the list in this week's parsha are not given in birth order but are in fact listed out of order. What might be the reason for this?

etymology

noun (plural etymologies) an account of the origins and the developments in meaning of a word.

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Looking at the names of the Tribes

וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: שלח-לקך אנשים ויתרו את-
 ארץ כנען אשר-אני נתן לבני ישראל איש אחד איש אחד
 למטה אבתיו תשלחו כל נשיא בהם: וישלח אתם משה
 ממדבר פארן על-פי יהוה כלם אנשים ראשי בני-ישראל
 המה: ואלה שמותם למטה ראובן שמוע בן-זכור: למטה
 שמעון שפט בן-חורי: למטה יהודה כלב בן-יפנה: למטה
 יששכר יגאל בן-יוסף: למטה אפרים חושע בן-נון: למטה
 בנימין פלטי בן-רפוא: למטה זבולן גדיאל בן-סדי: למטה
 יוסף למטה מנשה גדי בן-סוסי: למטה דן עמיאל בן-גמלי:
 למטה אשר סתור בן-מיכאל: למטה נפתלי נחבי בן-רפסי:
 למטה גד גאואל בן-מכי: ואלה שמות האנשים אשר-שלח
 משה לתור את-הארץ ויקרא משה להושע בן-נון יהושע:

1.	ראובן	Reuben
2.	שמעון	Simeon
3.	יהודה	Yehuda
4.	יששכר	Issachar
5.	אפרים	Ephraim
6.	בנימין	Benjamin
7.	זבולן	Zevulun
8.	מנשה	Menasah
9.	דן	Dan
10.	אשר	Asher
11.	נפתלי	Naphtali
12.	גד	Gad

Looking at the names of the Meraglim

וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: שלח-לקך אנשים ויתרו את-
 ארץ כנען אשר-אני נתן לבני ישראל איש אחד איש אחד
 למטה אבתיו תשלחו כל נשיא בהם: וישלח אתם משה
 ממדבר פארן על-פי יהוה כלם אנשים ראשי בני-ישראל
 המה: ואלה שמותם למטה ראובן שמוע בן-זכור: למטה
 שמעון שפט בן-חורי: למטה יהודה כלב בן-יפנה: למטה
 יששכר יגאל בן-יוסף: למטה אפרים חושע בן-נון: למטה
 בנימין פלטי בן-רפוא: למטה זבולן גדיאל בן-סדי: למטה
 יוסף למטה מנשה גדי בן-סוסי: למטה דן עמיאל בן-גמלי:
 למטה אשר סתור בן-מיכאל: למטה נפתלי נחבי בן-רפסי:
 למטה גד גאואל בן-מכי: ואלה שמות האנשים אשר-שלח
 משה לתור את-הארץ ויקרא משה להושע בן-נון יהושע:

1.	שמוע	Shamua
2.	שפט	Shaphat
3.	כלב	Caleb
4.	יגאל	Yigal
5.	הושע	Hoshea
6.	פלטי	Palti
7.	גדיאל	Gadiel
8.	גדי	Gadi
9.	עמיאל	Amiel
10.	סתור	Setur
11.	נחבי	Nakhbi
12.	גאואל	Geuel

Here are listed the twelve tribes and also the twelve names of the men who were leaders of each tribe from the children of Yisrael. The next step is to look at the meanings of each name doing an in depth study based upon their root meanings. Sometimes these names when listed in a particular way in the Hebrew Scriptures make a sentence and can give us a deeper understanding of the mind and heart of G-d.

Examining the meaning of the names of the tribes which are listed:

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ראובן	Reuben	Behold a Son
שמעון	Simeon	Hear Him
יהודה	Yehuda	Give Him praise
יששכר	Issachar	He brings reward
אפרים	Ephraim	Doubly blessed
בנימין	Benyamin	The son of my right hand
זבולן	Zevulun	Dwelling with us
מנשה	Menasah	He will cause you to forget
דן	Dan	Judge
אשר	Asher	Happy and blessed
נפתלי	Naphtali	Strife – ie. the struggle between Rachel and Leah.
גד	Gad	Good luck / fortune

Examining the meaning of the names of the twelve men listed:

שמוע	Shamua	Hear
שפט	Shaphat	To decide / judge
כלב	Caleb	A dog
יגאל	Yigal	To liberate / redeem
הושע	Hoshea	Salvation
פלטי	Palti	My deliverer
גדיאל	Gadiel	G-d is my good fortune
גדי	Gadi	My good fortune
עמיאל	Amiel	G-d of my people
סתור	Setur	To be hidden, concealed
נחבי	Nakhbi	I hide / conceal (ref. strong's # 5147 and 2245)
גאואל	Geuel	G-d is magnified / exalted

65 Discussion

60 In this day and age, I have found modern Christianity is becoming more and more something that relies upon mystical experiences regardless of how incredible they may be. Some examples I can think of are the recent Florida movements that follow along the lines of the Brownsville Pensacola revival with the “holy laughter,” barking like dogs, and behavior that is just quite frankly one that is characterized as being totally out of control. Our society and culture today places a lot of emphasis on inner feelings and outer appearance and so it isn't surprising that the religious community can be pulled into this without giving it much thought. This however I believe is disastrous especially if it is used to defend ones belief or faith in Yeshua. Trying to use the mystical experience to explain why one becomes a follower of Yeshua to a skeptic is completely without substance outside of one's own personal experience, the person being ministered to does not really understand and never could without having experienced the same. There needs to be an objective foundation, something outside of our

ie. Like the *word of faith movement* whose doctrine teaches that Christians are gods and therefore do not need to ask “in God's will” but rather use our own divinity to speak what we want into being, like if we lack faith we are not healthy and wealthy because God intends for us to be rich ... etc.

experience with which we can use as a frame of reference by which we can judge our experiences.

85 This objective authority is nothing less than the inspired and eternal word of G-d, the Bible. As you know the attacks upon the bible today are at an all time high, but not only that, attacks upon the very person of Yeshua the Messiah from all major religions specifically the scriptures which are being taken into question are the Apostolic Writings (the gospels, epistles, etc). So, you make ask the question whether or not we can trust the Apostolic Scriptures or not? If we are honest we need to ask the same question about all of scripture, whether we can receive the Tanach (Torah, Prophets, and Writings)? Can we trust our personal experience? Were we there at Mount Sinai, did we see and hear the thundering of HaShem's presence? We did not personally witness the writing of the Torah by Moshe's hand, but we receive the Torah because it comes to us endowed with G-d's mark of authenticity. We receive it because it has been passed down from generation to generation by HaShem's people until it has come to us into our hands. We believe and receive the Torah based upon faith, not by an irrational leap ... but into faith which is given by G-d himself. Therefore, in what we receive, the Torah, we take as the final measuring rod of all Scripture. For example if a prophet comes and speaks contrary to the Torah he/she is to be rejected as a false prophet. A true prophet of HaShem cannot set aside the Torah.

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105 So this brings us to this week's study on the names of the tribes and twelve men (Meraglim) who were sent into the Promised Land. As I mentioned earlier that if we examine the meaning of the names found in the Holy Scriptures, it sometimes can make out sentences, and give us a deeper understanding of the meaning and heart of G-d. So, let's have a look at what the scriptures say when we study the etymology of the names:

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Names of the Tribes

110 Behold a son ... Hear him ... Give him praise ... He brings reward ... Doubly blessed ... The son of my right hand ... Dwelling with us ... He will cause you to forget ... Judge ... Happy and blessed ... Strife ... Fortune.

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Names of the Meraglim

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120 Hear ... judge ... dog ... to redeem ... salvation ... my deliverer ... G-d is my good fortune ... my good fortune ... G-d of my people --- to be concealed ... I hide ... G-d is magnified.

Conclusion

125 So ask yourself this question: "How do we know Yeshua?" through the apostolic scriptures and we must strive to find G-d's Messiah in the ancient inspired record which HaShem has revealed to us. We know the Yeshua of the

130 gospels but do we know the Yeshua as revealed to us in the Torah? When I read
the etymology of the names of the tribes in the order in which they are written, I
see G-d telling me to behold a son (referring to the Messiah), hear him, give him
praise for he brings reward. He will cause you to forget your troubles and pain,
but he will also return as judge. Happy and blessed are we who believe, though
we struggle and strife in this world, Hashem is my wealth.

135 Examining the etymology on the names of the Meraglim I see I am judged
guilty, but HaShem has redeemed me, I have salvation through my deliverer, G-d
is my good fortune/riches. I also see that G-d has concealed something, and He is
magnified. Interestingly Yeshua mentions something about concealment in the
gospel of Matthew and Luke:

140 **Matthew 11:25**

11:25 At that time Jesus said, 'I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. (NASB)

145 **Luke 10:21**

10:21 At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, 'I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. (NASB)

150 Ultimately the scriptures form the foundation of our faith, apart from the
Torah, the Prophets, the Writings (Tanach), and the Apostolic Writings we have
no faith because we would have nothing to base it upon. The question you have
before you today is this: "will I receive the inspired message of the Most High G-
d regarding His Messiah?" If so, ask HaShem today to forgive you of your sins
155 because of the blood atonement that has been made by His Messiah Yeshua, ask
Yeshua to become Lord of your life and help you to walk in newness of life, and
faith and to understand what that truly means to live a life that is wholly given in
faith as he has shown us in his Holy Torah.

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170 **Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever

Please go reread all the verses quoted within the scriptural context it is written.